The concept of value has now occupied the minds of philosophers more than ever before. Bosanquet is probably the first to deal with the problem, and Hartmann developed it into a full system of philosophy of value. The reason why I am interested in the concept of value is that I find it to be the most important concept of our time. Everything depends on what we consider a value in our life. The nature of the object we value determines the way of our life, including reactions to Nature and society. We may say that it decides the destiny of the universe in so far as it is determined by human beings.

However, it is certain that the question of value arises out of the idea of self-realisation. For an object is considered valuable when an individual identifies himself with the object, in the sense that he makes it the means of realising his self. Therefore, a treatment of the concept of value entails a discussion on the idea of self-realisation.

When we come to consider the idealist philosophy we find that it involves the idea of value. All the idealist philosophers—from Plato to Royce—take the urge for the realisation of one's own self to be the motive behind human life, and conceive the idea of truth as evolving out of this urge. The idea of self and self-realisation have been differently conceived by different thinkers. But they do not dispute about the main question of value. This assuredly characterises their philosophies as philosophy of value. My object is to bring out this characteristic inherent in their works.

The word "good" is often used to express our sense of value. We define a thing as good when we find that it has a value for me. Philosophy does not always contradict common sense. When, however, the idea of value transcends the ordinary
ordinary idea of good, the former idea is used in a strict sense.

In fact, the question of value or of self-realisation can be understood only with reference to will. For the necessity of the self is expressed in will. The idea of good also refers to it. So, how our will determines itself has been the primary concern of the philosophers who are occupied with the problem of value. Sometimes the sphere of value transcends the sphere of will. But in that case "Will" is taken in a limited sense, which does not fit in with its common use. Generally, however, an analysis of the will serves as the foundation of a theory of value.

The concept of value is, then, found to involve the idea of autonomy in the determination of the ideal of the self as well as in the endeavour to achieve it. Only a self-determined ideal represents one's idea of perfection, and involves the concept of self-realisation in the true sense of the term. We have to keep this in mind when we come to treat of different philosophical works in the light of the idea of value.

In this work I have discussed the chief exponents of idealism in order to show how far they have developed a concept of value. I have grouped Aristotle with Plato under the head "Ancient Idealism," the reason being that his "Protrepticus" and also some parts of his "Eudemian Ethics" have an idealistic ring about them. I have devoted a separate chapter on Green instead of putting him together with the Neo-Hegelians. Green obviously comes under the influence of Hegel, but I think, he was influenced more by Kant. He is therefore often represented as a Neo-Kantian. It seems to me that Green seeks to solve the Kantian problem with the help of certain suggestions from Hegel and Spinoza. I have discussed this point in the relevant chapter.

The neo-idealistic system of thought certainly involves a discussion on value. Yet I have left it out of consideration here, because it takes a line of its own and is worthy of a separate treatment which I cannot take up within the limits of the present work.